



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

External Evaluation and Review Report

North Shore Language School
Limited

Date of report: 20 December 2023

About North Shore Language School

North Shore Language School (NSLS) offers English language programmes for international, and occasionally domestic students who want to improve their English, or to prepare for the IELTS (International English language Testing System) examination.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	122 Wairau Road, Glenfield, North Shore City, Auckland
Eligible to enrol intl students:	Yes
Number of students ¹ :	Domestic: one International: 24; nationalities enrolled at the time of the EER include students from China, India, Korea, Russia, Columbia, Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Taiwan.
Number of staff:	Four full-time, two part-time
TEO profile:	See NSLS on the NZQA website There have been several significant changes at NSLS since the previous evaluation in December 2017. COVID-19 pandemic disruptions decreased student enrolments and led to a corresponding reduction in programmes offered, as well as reduced staff numbers.
Last EER outcome:	The 2017 external evaluation and review (EER) of NSLS resulted in summative judgements of Highly Confident in educational performance and Confident in capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	The current EER looked at the following focus areas:

¹ There are no Māori or Pasifika students and no students declaring a disability.

- Certificate in General English (including Preparation for IELTS) (levels 1-4) Ref: 106248/1 which currently constitutes NSLS's entire delivery. This is an NZQA-approved training scheme.
- International Students: Support and Wellbeing

MoE Number: 7608
NZQA reference: C52373
Dates of Virtual EER visit: 30 and 31 August 2023

Summary of results

There is plausible evidence that NSLS is providing quality education and support leading to high levels of satisfaction and positive outcomes for its students and graduates.

Highly Confident in educational performance

- NSLS has strong course completions along with high student satisfaction and engagement with their education. Students are achieving their academic and personal goals.
- NSLS is highly student-centric, with a widespread and embedded commitment to the success and wellbeing of all students. The organisation has created a warm, welcoming and safe environment for all students.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Experienced, qualified staff use their qualifications and experience to ensure that the education delivery is engaging and relevant to students' aspirations.
- Management performs well and the PTE has a clear philosophy, values and purpose that are reflected throughout the organisation. The PTE has sufficient resources and effectively manages its important compliance accountabilities.
- Considering the size of the PTE, self-assessment at NSLS is authentic, transparent and effective, although at times ad hoc; the use of findings to systematically bring about worthwhile improvements is variable.

Key evaluation question findings²

1.1 How well do students achieve?

1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including students?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students at NSLS are completing their courses at a consistently high rate.³ They acquire useful skills and knowledge and develop their cognitive abilities through the successful completion of English language study. This enables them to meet their study goals – whether they be general language improvement for family and social interaction, church and work-related communication, or further study upon successfully reaching a target IELTS score.</p> <p>Through exit interviews and post-graduation telephone surveys, NSLS systematically collects data from graduates which provides useful information about the value of NSLS programmes and the achievement of graduates’ goals. NSLS’s ongoing relationship with many graduates also provides them with good anecdotal information about the positive way in which the programmes have contributed to their lives. In the period 2021 to present, approximately 75 percent of graduates have gone on to further study or employment.</p> <p>Staff at NSLS demonstrate a good understanding of, and commitment to, the factors that lead to student achievement. They regularly analyse, discuss and implement ideas for improving achievement. The organisation has staff meetings twice per term where ideas for improving course delivery and student achievement are discussed agreed and documented. Importantly, these meetings involve teachers across the</p>

² The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation’s activities.

³ Refer Table 1, Appendix 1.

	<p>whole cohort, so that individual student's rates of progress are able to be discussed with previous teachers and with their prospective teacher for the next term. NSLS has integrated New Zealand content and context into the programme design and delivery in response to student requests.</p> <p>Progression is contingent on five-weekly summative test scores, as well as regular formative progress tests and the professional judgment of the teachers. Staff have a good understanding of individual and group achievement, and keep good records. However, the PTE was not able to easily provide a comprehensive overview of student progression over time, to demonstrate how the students are progressing through the language levels at a satisfactory rate. It would also be beneficial to determine some indicators of wellbeing and confidence to provide a more substantiated measure of these attributes. Such information will be important as NSLS increases student numbers.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Students are retained in study and show progress in using English language and meeting their personal and academic goals. The PTE would benefit from making better use of the achievement and graduate outcomes information and data that it collects to be assured of maintaining current levels of achievement and identifying opportunities for improvement.</p>

1.3 How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of students and other relevant stakeholders?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>NSLS's efforts to meet the personal and academic goals of every student is an area of strength for the organisation. The mix of programmes offered, the flexible approach to addressing individual needs, and the delivery style make for a positive experience for the students. Student evaluation feedback supports this view. Students typically range in age from teenagers to grandparents.</p>

	<p>The aspirations and interests of every student are identified and documented early in their study. Teachers structure their lessons to align with those aspirations. Students regularly reflect on their goals with NSLS staff, which ensures that student learning needs are being identified, consistently monitored, and well met.</p> <p>Oversight of teacher quality is robust. NSLS's peer review of teaching consistently demonstrates that the teachers are delivering content in ways that engage the students and create a positive classroom environment to enhance learning.</p> <p>NSLS staff regularly reflect on their performance, but the processes associated with programme review are not well connected. All of the components of programme review are in place, but the PTE would benefit from formalising the process to provide a regular and comprehensive whole-of-programme review including the collation and more formalised analysis of stakeholder feedback. The aim is to ensure that programmes are systematically updated to meet the existing and emerging needs of students and changes to accepted pedagogical practice.</p> <p>There was evidence of ongoing internal and external moderation processes supporting sound assessment.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>NSLS's regular and purposeful interaction with its students and stakeholders is a strong feature of the organisation. This ensures that the programmes and activities meet existing and emerging needs. A more formalised system of programme review would potentially better ensure that ongoing student and stakeholder needs are met.</p>

1.4 How effectively are students supported and involved in their learning?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students at NSLS receive active, integrated and ongoing social and academic support from staff across the organisation. Students are well guided into courses that are appropriate to their aspirations and capabilities. Teachers and students described numerous activities and initiatives that motivate, engage and encourage students to get the full benefit from their time at NSLS.</p> <p>The learning environment at NSLS is supportive, providing an excellent foundation for enhanced success. Staff seek out and respond to student feedback. There was a clear sense of shared accountability across all staff for the support of students.</p> <p>A comprehensive orientation programme is available to students in their first week of study. Current small class sizes ensure that teachers can give students individual attention as required. Students appreciate the diverse range of nationalities at NSLS, particularly as it means the only common language is English. As one student said, 'If you want to make friends here, you have to speak English'.</p> <p>Attendance expectations are effectively communicated to the students and are monitored closely, with timely and appropriate follow-up as required. Although the premises are set up for mobility access, no students have been identified or have self-identified as having a disability.</p> <p>The organisation has effective processes to review how well it meets the spirit and intent of the Code of Practice.⁴ NSLS has completed a very thorough self-review of their implementation of the Code. The self-review identified areas for further development, and the PTE continues to address them.</p>

⁴ [The Education \(Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners\) Code of Practice 2021](#)

Conclusion:	Students at NSLS experience a strongly student-centred learning environment. Responses to the wellbeing needs of the students are appropriate and lead to positive outcomes for them.
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1.5 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>NSLS's organisational goals and objectives are formally documented, and management and staff have a common understanding of the PTE's vision and direction. As a single owner-operated organisation, there is no governance structure per se, although from time to time the owner makes use of external business planning and quality assurance expertise. The business model is sustainable, as shown in the two decades of successful operation and the way in which the PTE managed through the disruptions associated with COVID-19.</p> <p>The organisation anticipates and responds well to change. Recommendations from the last EER were initially addressed, but some improvements were not maintained through the COVID-19 disruptions, resulting in similar recommendations arising from this EER.</p> <p>NSLS employs qualified and experienced staff, whom it manages effectively and actively develops. The value that NSLS management puts on the experience and know-how of the teaching team is clearly apparent and makes a positive difference to educational quality. The performance of the teaching staff is formally reviewed annually, but this does not preclude regular and ongoing feedback of a formative nature.</p> <p>Teaching and learning are adequately resourced with appropriate teaching materials and fit-for-purpose facilities. NSLS has well-established administration systems and procedures in place, with the owner attesting to legal and ethical policies and practices.</p> <p>NSLS encourages reflection on its role and how to continue to make ongoing and continuous improvements to meeting</p>

	the needs of students and other stakeholders. NSLS is collecting useful data. However, collation, interpretation and analysis of this data – and subsequent actions to improve educational performance – is sometimes informal, and fragmented rather than systematic, strategic and informed by high-quality data across the organisation.
Conclusion:	NSLS has a clear vision and understanding of its business, and strong leadership provides effective support for educational achievement. Self-assessment and subsequent actions to improve educational performance is a work in progress.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Compliance is the responsibility of the owner and is personally overseen by him.</p> <p>Despite a system being in place, there have been a few lapses in compliance management which has led to some potential compliance accountabilities being overlooked. For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSLS reduced the teaching day by 15 minutes at the beginning and end of each day, as a genuine response to feedback from students who have children at school. Students are required to make up the time with directed study on a Friday. While the change is student-centred, NSLS needs to submit a formal change to the approved programme to reflect the new hours and incorporation of directed study. Otherwise, this change could result in the PTE not meeting the required number of teaching hours to match the programme approval. • NSLS has an arrangement with Brightside Education, an after-school provider, to share the NSLS premises for Brightside’s school holiday programmes. NSLS staff also at times support the programme, and it is promoted on NSLS’s website. The lack of formality in this

	<p>arrangement may put NSLS's compliance with the Code of Practice at risk.</p> <p>These weaknesses have not had a material impact on student performance to date, but they indicate that management of compliance at NSLS is not universally effective.</p> <p>All NZQA submissions are up to date; moderation requirements are met; staff are police vetted; NSLS is meeting its obligations with respect to the Code of Practice; and a sample of student files viewed during the EER contained all the required documents and information.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Although important compliance responsibilities are being met, NSLS needs to adopt a more coherent and effective approach to understanding and proactively managing its compliance accountabilities to ensure continued compliance.</p>

Focus areas

This section reports significant findings in each focus area, not already covered in Part 1.

2.1 Certificate in General English (including Preparation for IELTS) (Levels 1-4) Ref: 106248/1

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

2.2 International Students: Support and Wellbeing

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent

Recommendations

Recommendations are not compulsory but their implementation may improve the quality and effectiveness of the training and education provided by the tertiary education organisation (TEO). They may be referred to in subsequent external evaluation and reviews (EERs) to gauge the effectiveness of the TEO's quality improvements over time.

NZQA recommends that North Shore Language School Limited:

- Maintain stronger processes to monitor, review and proactively respond to important compliance requirements.
- Review the current hours and delivery format for General English classes to ensure they match programme approval (or seek a change from NZQA as necessary).
- Formalise the arrangement with Brightside Education to confirm that responsibilities of the relevant parties are clearly articulated and are made explicit in promotional material and on the NSLS website. This is to ensure that NSLS remains compliant with the Code of Practice.
- Strengthen the programme review process to bring together all information and data collected. This will allow a more holistic self-assessment approach to analysis in terms of what is working well and any necessary improvements.

Requirements

Requirements relate to the TEO's statutory obligations under legislation that governs their operation. This include NZQA Rules and relevant regulations promulgated by other agencies.

There are no requirements arising from the external evaluation and review.

Appendix 1

Table 1. Attendance and achievement: Certificate in General English (Including Preparation for IELTS) (Levels 1-4), 2019-23⁵

General English Course	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023(Until Term 2)
English One: Elementary	98%	100%	95%	95%	97%
Attendance rate	97%	100%	95%	95%	98%
English Two: Pre-Intermediate	100%	100%	95%	100%	98%
Attendance rate	100%	100%	95%	100%	94%/92%
English Three: Intermediate	98%	100%	Nil	Nil	100%
Attendance rate	97%	100%	Nil	Nil	95%
English Four: Upper-intermediate	100%	100%	Nil	Nil	Nil
Attendance rate	100%	100%	Nil	Nil	Nil
IELTS	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	100%
Attendance rate	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	97%
Total cohort achievement	100%	100%	95.00%	97.50%	98.00%

⁵ Data supplied by NSLS

Appendix 2

Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published rules. The methodology used is described in the web document <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process. They are based on a representative selection of focus areas, and a sample of supporting information provided by the TEO under review or independently accessed by NZQA. As such, the report's findings offer a guide to the relative quality of the TEO at the time of the EER, in the light of the known evidence, and the likelihood that this level of quality will continue.

For the same reason, these findings are always limited in scope. They are derived from selections and samples evaluated at a point in time. The supporting methodology is not designed to:

- *Identify organisational fraud⁶*
- *Provide comprehensive coverage of all programmes within a TEO, or of all relevant evidence sources*
- *Predict the outcome of other reviews of the same TEO which, by posing different questions or examining different information, could reasonably arrive at different conclusions.*

⁶ NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) comprehensively monitor risk in the tertiary education sector through a range of other mechanisms. When fraud, or any other serious risk factor, has been confirmed, corrective action is taken as a matter of urgency.

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2021, which are made by NZQA under section 452(1)(t) of the Education and Training Act 2020 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister of Education.

Self-assessment and participation and cooperation in external evaluation and review are requirements for:

- maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities, and*
- maintaining consent to assess against standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards for all TEOs including ITOs but excluding universities, and*
- maintaining training scheme approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2021, the Consent to Assess Against Standards Rules 2021 and the Training Scheme Rules 2021 respectively.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2021 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes, training schemes and consents to assess and registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2021. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz). All rules cited above are available at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>.

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